



Contact!

Leonard Rosen, Editor

MAY 2007 ISSUE

Editor's Comments...Our 16th Annual Reunion was held Saturday April 21, 2007 at the Sportsmen's Lodge in North Hollywood, California.



Guest speaker Clay Lacy showed us some terrific flight sequences and was both

motivating and inspirational in his comments. The event began with a cocktail hour and a half, hosted in absentia by John Loustau (see his obituary elsewhere in this issue). Our new Chairman Hal Cope kicked off the luncheon by introducing some of our guests, calling upon Ruby Mercer to do the Invocation and Barbara Nemer to do the Flag Salute. After lunch and the program, came time for the door prize drawing which included a three day two night stay at the Riviera Hotel in La Vegas, a breakfast, lunch or dinner for two at the Sportsmen's Lodge Hotel, a dinner for two at the Sportsmen's Lodge Restaurant, a GPS Navigation System, several different types of flashlights and some books. It seemed like all in attendance enjoyed the event and are looking forward to next year. During the event Hal Cope told the membership about the possibility of writing and publishing a

book about the history of the non-skeds. In order to get the book published, APA will need to determine if it can raise the necessary funds to cover certain costs and make a minimum guarantee to a publisher. Pledge forms were passed out and contacts were made with some possible donors both during and after the event. The response has been such that we are now moving forward to obtain a contract with the author and a publisher. Until those agreements have been consummated, we do not yet want any of the funds



pledged and will not solicit any more pledges until we determine how much more, if anything, will be needed. To those who have made pledges, our sincere thanks and we will keep you informed of our progress and as to when we will begin collecting the money.

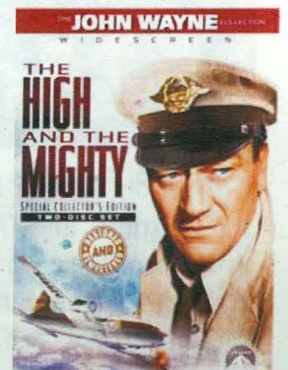
Palm Springs Air Museum...I recently had the opportunity to visit the Palm Springs Air Museum. The museum has one of the largest collections of flyable WW II aircraft including a B-17 Flying Fortress, a B-25 Mitchell Bomber, a P-51 Mustang, a C47 Dakota Transport and many others. In addition, there is Douglas SBD Dive Bomber which



had been brought to the museum after a fifty year rest at the bottom

of Lake Michigan. The aircraft has been completely restored by the museum staff, is in flying condition and is on display for all to admire. There are pictures of rare and original combat photography as well as various ongoing video documentaries scattered throughout the exhibits. But the best part of the experience was to talk with the docents who are a living breathing part of the museum, the aircraft and their historic place in WWII. If you're in the area, don't miss it.

My Favorite Aviation Movie...Late last year Britain's National Museum of Flight took a survey on the nation's favorite aviation film. Tom Cruise 1986 blockbuster *Top Gun* won hands down with almost 25% of the votes cast. Other favorites were *The Dam Busters*, the comedy classic *Airplane*, *Memphis Bell*, *Flight of the Phoenix*, *The Aviator* and *Firefox*. While I don't miss many airplane pictures and I saw all of those mentioned, my favorite was



The High and the Mighty. Released in 1954, the story line was about a DC-4 on a flight from Honolulu to San Francisco. Shortly after passing the point of no return one of the engines seizes, the prop separates and the engine twists in its mounts. The separating prop also breaches one of the wing tanks causing an additional loss of fuel. The likelihood of reaching San Francisco with the fuel remaining is doubtful and all on board are faced with the terror of having to ditch in a storm tossed sea. The movie examines how each of the plane's seventeen passengers and five crew members react to the stress. The aircraft ultimately lands in San Francisco with barely enough fuel to taxi to the gate. The movie received several academy awards and the theme song from the movie became a best seller.

As an ironic aside, the Transocean Airlines DC-4 aircraft used in the movie, N4726V, ten years later in 1964, took off on a charter flight from Honolulu to Los Angeles with six passenger and a crew of three. About eight hours into the flight a Mayday call was heard from the pilot who reported his position as about 700 miles west of San Francisco with a serious fire in his #2 engine. No further transmissions were received from the plane. The Coast Guard searched for five days but no traces of the aircraft or its occupants were ever found.

Burbank Airport Display... Marge Sorthun had made arrangements with Victor Gill and others at the Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena Airport Authority for APA to have a display case in the airport lobby



as part of their Aviation History at the Bob Hope Airport exhibit. Marge's untimely death put the APA portion of the project on hold for a while but it is now back on track. Joan LeBel has agreed to take over as Keeper of the

Collection and will be the contact person between the Airport and APA. The display sits in a prominent location in the ticketing lobby just to the right of the main entrance. As you can see from the picture, there are presently four model aircraft (three more are on order) and a number of old

photos. We still can use lots more material. We would really like to get some old advertising brochures, timetables, wings, hat badges and anything of that nature relating to the non-sked era. If you have such memorabilia you would like to contribute or even just loan for a while please contact me at rosen@efs-nlsc.com. In the meantime, if you happen to be at the Burbank Airport be sure to look in on the display.

Obituary...Wally Schirra, one of the original astronauts in the Mercury 7 project, died of cancer at age 84. He took his first flight with his barnstorming father at age 13 and learned to fly before he enrolled at the Naval Academy in



[Annapolis](#). After his 1945 graduation, Schirra served with the Seventh Fleet and flew 90 combat missions during the Korean War. He was credited with shooting down one Soviet MiG-15 and possibly a second. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross and two Air Medals.

He was the fifth American in space and the third to orbit Earth. He was the only astronaut who flew in three of the nation's pioneering space programs: Mercury, Gemini and Apollo. NASA selected Schirra as one of the first group of astronauts, along with Gordon Cooper, Scott Carpenter, John Glenn, Alan Shepard, Gus Grissom and Deke Slayton. He flew on the fifth Project Mercury flight, orbiting the Earth six times on October 3, 1962, and was commander of the Gemini 6 flight, which launched December 15, 1965. Schirra was commander of Apollo 7, the first manned flight of the Apollo spacecraft and the Saturn 1B rocket. He and crew mates Walter Cunningham and Donn Eisele successfully checked all the Apollo systems during the 11-day mission that launched October 11, 1968. The Apollo 7 mission qualified the spacecraft for later moon missions. Schirra retired from the Navy and NASA in 1969. He co-authored "The Real Space Cowboys" with Ed Buckbee, a former NASA public affairs officer and the first executive director of the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. The book highlights the Mercury astronauts and their contribution to the U.S. space program.

Americans like the tax collector better than their airlines, (Reuters) according to a recent customer satisfaction survey. Weighed down by delays, grumpy employees and lost bags, U.S. airlines

scored 63 out of a possible 100 on the University of Michigan's Customer Satisfaction Index. That is a touch below the 65 awarded to the bureaucracy-laden U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The airlines' score -- down two points from last year -- was the lowest for the industry since 2001 and reflects growing dissatisfaction with the travel industry. Hotels scored 71, falling four points to the lowest level since 2002, according to the survey. The Index surveys about 20,000 people every quarter by telephone, focusing on different industries each time.

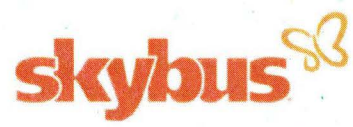
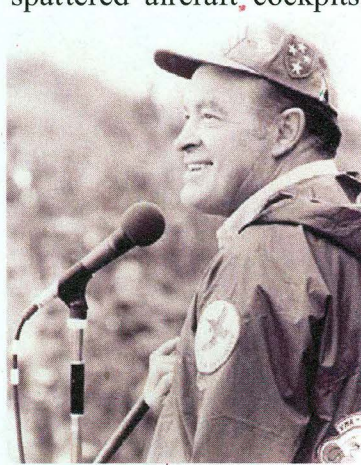
The airlines' long struggle to return to profitability after a prolonged slump following the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 may have led them to cut costs and service too far. "The process took so much out of them -- they may have cut beyond the bone," said Claes Fornell, director of the University of

Michigan's National Quality Research Center.

The poor performance from U.S. airlines may make it easier for newcomers such as Virgin America and Skybus to win over customers. It opens the door for new competition and they will have an easier time capturing this market," said Fornell.

United Airlines, which came out of bankruptcy last year, was at the bottom, falling 7 points to 56. Delta Air Lines Inc., which emerged from bankruptcy on April 30, was close behind, falling 5 points to 59. No-frills discount carrier Southwest Airlines Co. led the industry with a score of 76, two points higher than the previous year.

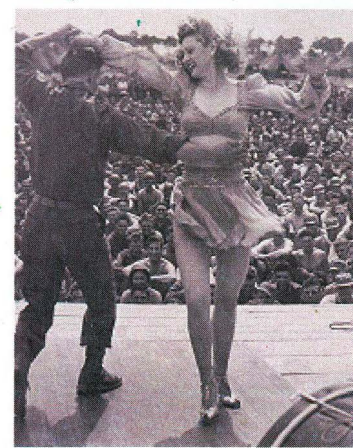
Cope's Notes...HOLLYWOOD WHERE ART THOU? They came from jungle fox holes, tired, dirty, wet; from blood spattered aircraft cockpits; from hot cramped noisy tanks; from bulldozers building airstrips on coral reefs; from peeling potatoes in the mess hall; from ships from across the oceans; from burned out jungle outposts; from hospitals on stretchers, crutches, on the arms of their buddies, in wheel chairs and



they came and came and came - Marines, Air Force, Navy, and Army. They came to sit in the hot sun on hard wooden benches, to enjoy a brief respite from fighting and dying in WWII, Korea and Vietnam. Fighting and dying to keep America, Americans and the free world free from tyranny and oppression.

They came to watch Bob Hope and his famous golf swing entertain them, for a brief time, with joke, song, dance, and memories from home aided by Jerry Colonna, Francis Langford and others. Hollywood entertainers went to our service men and women, wherever they were, to let them know they

were appreciated, not forgotten, and loved by the folks back home. At its high point the USO, with an outpouring of support and of patriotism from Hollywood, had more than 3,000 clubs. Curtains were rising on USO shows 700



times a day around the world. From 1941 to 1947 Hollywood and the USO presented more than 400,000 performances.

The outpouring of love and support for our service men and women from Hollywood featured unselfish entertainers such as Bing Crosby, Judy Garland, Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, Frank Sinatra, Marlene Dietrich, Ann Sheridan, James Cagney, James Stewart, Danny Kay, The Rockettes, Al Jolson, Fred Astaire, the Andrews Sisters, Joe E. Brown, Lucille Ball, Glenn Miller, Martha Raye, Mickey Rooney, Betty Hutton, Dinah Shore and many others.

Prior to shipping out during WWII, I was stationed in Los Angeles for final training as a US Navy radio operator. I attended a USO club in Los Angeles for comradeship, entertainment, doughnuts and coffee -- it was sort of a home away from home. During one of my ship's unloading layovers in Guadalcanal I was fortunate enough to sit on one of those hard makeshift jungle benches in a driving rain at a USO/Hollywood show. For a brief period my buddies and I allowed the cares of the war slip into oblivion. I will never forget it -- neither will millions of my WWII comrades if they are still around to remember.

Where is Hollywood's support and compassion for our men and women fighting and dying for us in the war on terror? Does Hollywood's elites hate President Bush so deep and unbending they are unwilling to support our military? Is it because they are so busy riding the merry go round of marriage and divorce, booze and drug parties, forgetting to wear panties, and living a selfish lifestyle of everything goes with no responsibility or accountability all the while dancing to the tune of leftist and secular progressive elements determined to bring America to her knees.

Instead the mantra of Hollywood is espousing "America is the problem - not the terrorists who are trying to kill us and it the fault of one man - President Bush" I wish there was a modern day clone of Bob Hope who would step forward and carry on his vision - of supporting and thanking our military men and women for fighting and dying for America, Americans and the Free World. God Bless America!

Obituary...The airline industry has lost one of its early airline pioneers. **Jack B. Lewin** passed away peacefully in his sleep at age 94, on March 26, 2007, at his home in Beverly Hills, California.



He served in flight operations with the Army Air Corps during World War II. After leaving the service, in 1947, Lewin, along with Red Hart, Jim Fischgrund and Stanley Weiss, formed North American Airlines. In 1957 an

adverse Supreme Court ruling forced it to discontinue regular passenger flights although the airline continued to operate air charters into the 1960's. Lewin pursued other business interests building several apartment complexes and hundreds of homes in Pasadena. He started North American Car Leasing in Southern California and along with business partners founded Dollar a Day Rent a Car in Honolulu. He loved thoroughbred racing. Was active in a number of civic organizations and was a member of Aviation Pioneers Association.

Obituary...**George Anton** passed away March 14, 2007. He was born June 28, 1931 in the small village of Hackett in southwestern Pennsylvania where he spent most of his childhood. By age ten when World War II started he could identify any airplane that flew and he became the official airplane "spotter" for the town. His love of airplanes and aviation never wavered. He filled scrapbooks with any article or picture of Aircraft he could find and cherished and saved them all of his life. He served with the U.S Army Security Agency during the Korean War.

Following his discharge he worked in many facets of aviation—passenger agent, outside sale, instructor, military liason for Skycoach Agency, Trans Alaskan Airlines, Trans California, Saturn, Northwest and United. He later worked in the entertainment field, which was his second love, until his retirement. He is survived by Nancy, his wife of 54 years, three children, three grand children and a great grandson.

Obituary...**John Loustau** passed away April 2, 2007 after a long battle with cancer. As a young man he served with the merchant marine and U.S. Coast



Guard where he developed a love of the sea. He began his aviation career with North American Airlines where he was their flight coordinator for military charters at Travis Air Force Base. He later formed Travis Flight Service which he operated successfully for over 55 years.

He was a former Commodore of the California Power Cruisers Association, belonged to the Encinal Yacht Club, Solano Yacht Club and the Delta Yacht Club. He was Captain of the MistyTwo for many years along with his wife Lillian who was Navigator. He was a member of a number of organizations and a staunch supporter of Aviation Pioneers Association.

A Rough Flight for Discount Airlines (Business Week) This summer promises to be turbulent for European discount airlines. Stiff competition, weaker market conditions, and increased capacity are taking their toll on budget carriers, long viewed as the darlings of the European aviation industry.

On May 9, Britain's easyJet, Europe's second-largest discounter, conceded its load factor, or percentage of seats filled, had fallen to 83.1% in April from 86.4% a year earlier. The news follows recent similar revelations from British Airways, Dublin-based Ryanair, and Germany's Air Berlin. EasyJet CEO



Andy Harrison said in a statement that to reverse the trend the company will lower prices on

summer flights "to sustain high load factors in weaker market conditions." Earlier that day, archrival Ryanair announced its biggest fare sale ever, offering 10 million seats from \$20, including taxes. The move should drive down prices across Europe and boost demand, says Ryanair CEO Michael O'Leary. Fares

aren't the only thing falling. The share prices of European short-haul airlines have taken a battering in recent weeks. Fearing sluggish demand in the summer--normally the discounters' busiest and most lucrative period--investors in easyJet, Ryanair, and British Airways have driven down their shares by 17%, 8.5%, and 5%, respectively, during the four weeks ending May 10. It seems Europe's discount airlines are in danger of becoming victims of their own success.

A similar story is unfolding at easyJet, the budget carrier founded a dozen years ago by Greek entrepreneur Stelios Haji-Ioannou. It has grown from two leased Boeing 737-200s to a 130-plane fleet flying 292 routes to 75 airports in 20 European countries. The success of these pioneers has inspired a slew of copycats across Europe, where low-cost carriers now account for about 25% of the airline market, a fivefold increase from the beginning of the decade. But years of strong profits have encouraged discounters to buy more planes and fly more routes, flooding the market with capacity and putting fares under pressure. EasyJet alone has taken delivery of one new Airbus A319 every 12 days since September, 2003. With 104 Airbus planes on order, the carrier expects to increase capacity by 15% in the fiscal year ending Sept. 30. Meanwhile, Ryanair has seen 21% growth in capacity this year, taking delivery of 27 Boeing 737-800s for a fleet total of 138. By the first



half of 2008, Ryanair plans to increase its fleet to 170. "This increased capacity will make it even more difficult for low-cost carriers to navigate the increasingly

competitive pricing environment," says Yan Derocles, aviation analyst in Paris.

The airlines place part of the blame for their current troubles on tax hikes in Britain and rising airport charges across Europe. In February, Britain doubled air passenger duties on short-haul economy fares to \$20 per departing passenger, citing the need to curb carbon emissions. Passenger charges at British airports also are rising. Fees at London Stansted, Ryanair's biggest base and one of easyJet's London hubs, have increased by 50%, to \$4 a passenger. The pricing environment may be a lot tougher, but both easyJet and Ryanair are on track to post strong full-year results.

Indeed, the gloomy summer forecast hasn't curbed the budget carriers' ambitious growth plans. Ryanair's

O'Leary says that he plans to double his number of passengers to 100 million and the number of bases he serves to 40 within five years. This summer may be choppy, but the long-term flight path still looks clear.

Obituary...Richard I. Pollard passed away December 5, 2006 a victim of cancer. He was buried with military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. He graduated from Beverly Hills High School in 1943. He served with the U.S Army in Korea and flew helicopters during the Viet Nam War where he was awarded a Purple Heart. He flew DC-3's and C-46's as co-pilot with Standard Airways. He flew DC-4's and DC-6's as a captain with the Great Lakes Group and 1049 Constellation's for California Hawaiian Airlines. Then on to Lanza in Peru. He flew 727's, DC-8's, DC-10's and 747's for Trans International and TransAmerica. While flying with TIA in 1968, he met his wife Georgia who was working there as a flight attendant. They were married 37 years. The people he flew with is a Who's Who of our industry; Bill Butler, Jack Bierman, Glen Taylor, Jack Pedesky, John Kinzer, and John Pinney among others. He will be truly remembered for his lifetime accomplishments.

Obituary...Marge Sorthun, age 71, passed away March 8, 2007 from complications due to pneumonia. She was born March 21, 1935 in Oak Park, Illinois



and moved to Burbank California in 1952. She attended Bellarmine-Jefferson Catholic High School and received an accounting degree from Glendale College. At age 23, along with her husband Jim Sorthun, she founded two charter airlines, Farrair and Admiral Air Service. Until 1962 the airlines

flew between Burbank and Oakland and the 11 western states operating seven DC-3's and a Martin 202. After 1963 they operated an aircraft sales and parts business known as Sorthun Aviation. She finished off her aviation career retiring from Lockheed in 1990. She was active in civic affairs working on a blue ribbon task force for the Burbank City Council. In fact, her last illness curtailed her run for a seat on the Burbank City Council. Marge was a director of the Aviation Pioneers, had recently arranged for the organization to have a permanent display in the lobby of the Burbank Airport, and was always available to do whatever needed to be done. She had a huge list of "old timers" with whom she maintained contact. She will be sorely missed.

